

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, BL
SUBJECT: ATTEMPTS TO UNITE OPPOSITION FAIL; PAZ CANDIDACY VIRTUALLY
CERTAIN

1. SUMMARY. WITH THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ELECTORAL
SLATES AT HAND, ALL ATTEMPTS THUS FAR TO UNITE THE OPPONENTS OF
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JUAN PEREDA HAVE FAILED. ON JUNE 7, FORMER
PRESIDENTS VICOTR PAZ ESTENSSORO AND HERNAN SILES ZUAZO MADE A
FINAL EFFORT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW PAZ TO SUPPORT
THE SILES CANDIDACY, BUT TALKS BROKE OFF WHEN SILES INSISTED ON
RESERVING THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL SLOT FOR THE LEFTIST MIR. A
MORE AMBITIOUS ATTEMPT BY LUIS ADOLFO SILES SALINAS TO UNITE
THE FOUR MAJOR OPPOSITION CANDIDATES HAS ALSO FAILED, ALTHOUGH
HE DID MANAGE TO GET SUPPORT FOR A DECLARATION OF COMMON PRINCIPLES.
WITH THE OPPOSITION THUS IN DISARRAY, THE PEREDA CANDIDACY LOOKS
STRONGER. THE BIG LOSER APPEARS TO BE SILES ZUAZO, WHO, WITH PAZ
VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO RUN, WILL NOW HAVE TO FIGHT UP-HILL TO
ENABLE HIS BACKERS TO OBTAIN EVEN A SMALL SHARE OF THE
CONGRESSIONAL MINORITY. END SUMMARY.

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2. WITH ONLY A FEW HOURS REMAINING BEFORE THE MIDNIGHT,
JUNE 9, DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ELECTORAL SLATES, ALL
ATTEMPTS TO FORGE A BROAD COALITION TO OPPOSE THE PRESIDENTIAL
BID OF JUAN PEREDA APPEAR TO HAVE FAILED. THE DIE WAS CAST
ON JUNE 7, AFTER FORMER PRESIDENTS VICTOR PAZ ESTENSSORO AND
HERNAN SILES ZUAZO MADE ONE FINAL EFFORT TO FIND A FORMULA

THAT WOULD PERMIT PAZ AND HIS FOLLOWERS TO BACK SILES' CANDIDACY.

2. ESENTIALLY, PAZ HAD OFFERED TO SUPPORT SILES IN RETURN FOR THE RIGHT TO NAME THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE AND 50 PERCENT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES; SILES COUNTERED BY AGREEING TO PERMIT PAZ 40 PERCENT OF CONGRESSIONAL LIST, BUT REFUSED TO GIVE UP THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL SLOT. ACCORDING TO A STATEMENT RELEASED BY PAZ' MNR-PRA (GUEVARA) ALLIANCE, COM-PROMISE WAS NOT POSSIBLE BECAUSE SILES INSISTED ON RESERVING THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL POSITION "FOR A POLITICAL PARTY THAT HAS STILL NOT PROVED ITS REALITY ON THE NATIONAL SCENE". THIS WAS A POINTED REFERENCE TO THE MNR, WHOSE CO-LEADER JAIME PAZ ZAMORA IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO EMERGE AS SILES' RUNNING MATE. SILES' UDP, IN A PARALLEL RELEASE, ATTRIBUTED THE BREAKDOWN IN NEGOTIATIONS TO PAZ' "CONSTANT INTRANSIGENCE".

3. A SOMEWHAT MORE QUIXOTIC ATTEMPT BY PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ON HUMAN RIGHTS LEADER LUIS ADOLFO SILES SALINAS TO UNITE ALL THE MAJOR OPPOSITION CANDIDATES (PAZ, SILES, RENE BERNAL AND JOSE PATINO AYOROA) HAS ALSO PROVED FRUITLESS. SILES WAS SUCCESSFUL, HOWEVER, IN GETTING SOME OPPOSITION LEADERS, INCLUDING PAZ, SILES ZUAZO, PATINO, MARIO GUTIERREZ (FSB), AND BENJAMIN MIGUEL (PDC), TO SUBSCRIBE TO A DECLARATION OF COMMON PRINCIPLES. THE NEW "POLITICAL PACT" CALLS FOR RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, REESTABLISHMENT OF FULL LABOR FREEDOMS AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY, CONSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS, DEROGATION OF THE STATE SECURITY LAW, SUPPRESSION OF THE MILITARY-CAMPESINO (PEASANT) PACT, AND MEASURES TO ESTABLISH JUDICIARY AUTONOMY. THE SIGNATORIES ALSO PLEDGE TO STRUGGLE AGAINST THE "CONTINUATION" OF THE PRESENT REGIME, ELECTORAL FRAUD, AND ANY ATTEMPT TO POSTPONE THE ELECTIONS. IN A FINAL POINT, THE DECLARATION EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT THE INCLINATION OF CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE MILITARY TO SUPPORT THE "OFFICIAL" CANDIDATE.

4. ALTHOUGH ELEVENTH HOUR CHANGES ARE CONVEIVABLE, THERE NOW APPEAR TO BE AS MANY AS EIGHT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN OPPOSITION TO PACE-SETTER JUAN PEREDA. THE MAJOR ONES ARE PAZ, SILES ZUAZO, AND FORMER MILITARY OFFICERS BERNAL AND PATINO. OTHERS, WHO DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH SUPPORT TO PLAY EVEN A SPOILER'S ROLE, INCLUDE EXTREME LEFTISTS FORMER MAJOR RUBEN SANCHEZ (REPRESENTING THE ALIN, THE PARTY OF DECEASED PRESIDENT J.J. TORRES), MARCELO QUIROGA SANTA CRUZ (BACKED BY A FACTION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY), CASIANO AMURRIO (FRI) AND LUCIANO TAPIA (TUPAC KATARI INDIAN MOVEMENT).

5. COMMENT: WITH THE OPPOSITION'S FAILURES TO UNITE, PEREDA'S

POSITION HAS BEEN FURTHER STRENGTHENED. THERE ARE PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT PEREDA AND PAZ MAY NOW TRY TO STRIKE A SECRET DEAL THAT WOULD ALLOW PAZ AND HIS FOLLOWERS CERTAIN BENEFITS UNDER A PEREDA GOVERNMENT. IN RETURN, ASSUMING IT WINS A LARGE SHARE OF THE "MINORITY" CONGRESSIONAL SEATS, THE MNR-PRA (GUEVARA) ALLIANCE WOULD PLEDGE TO CONSTITUTE A "SOFE" OR LOYAL OPPOSITION IN THE NEW LEGISLATURE. WHILE THIS MAY BE ONLY POLITICAL GOSSIP, IT IS CLEAR THAT PAZ IS MORE TO PEREDA'S LIKING AS AN OPPONENT THAN SILES ZUAZO. IT IS ALSO APPARENT THAT WITH PAZ VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO RUN, SILES' CHANCES OF MAKING A STRONG SHOWING ON JULY 9 ARE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED.

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